

# Editorial: After scandal, the Hunters Point Shipyard needs a comprehensive cleanup

Chronicle Editorial Board | May 16, 2018 | Updated: May 16, 2018 6:42pm

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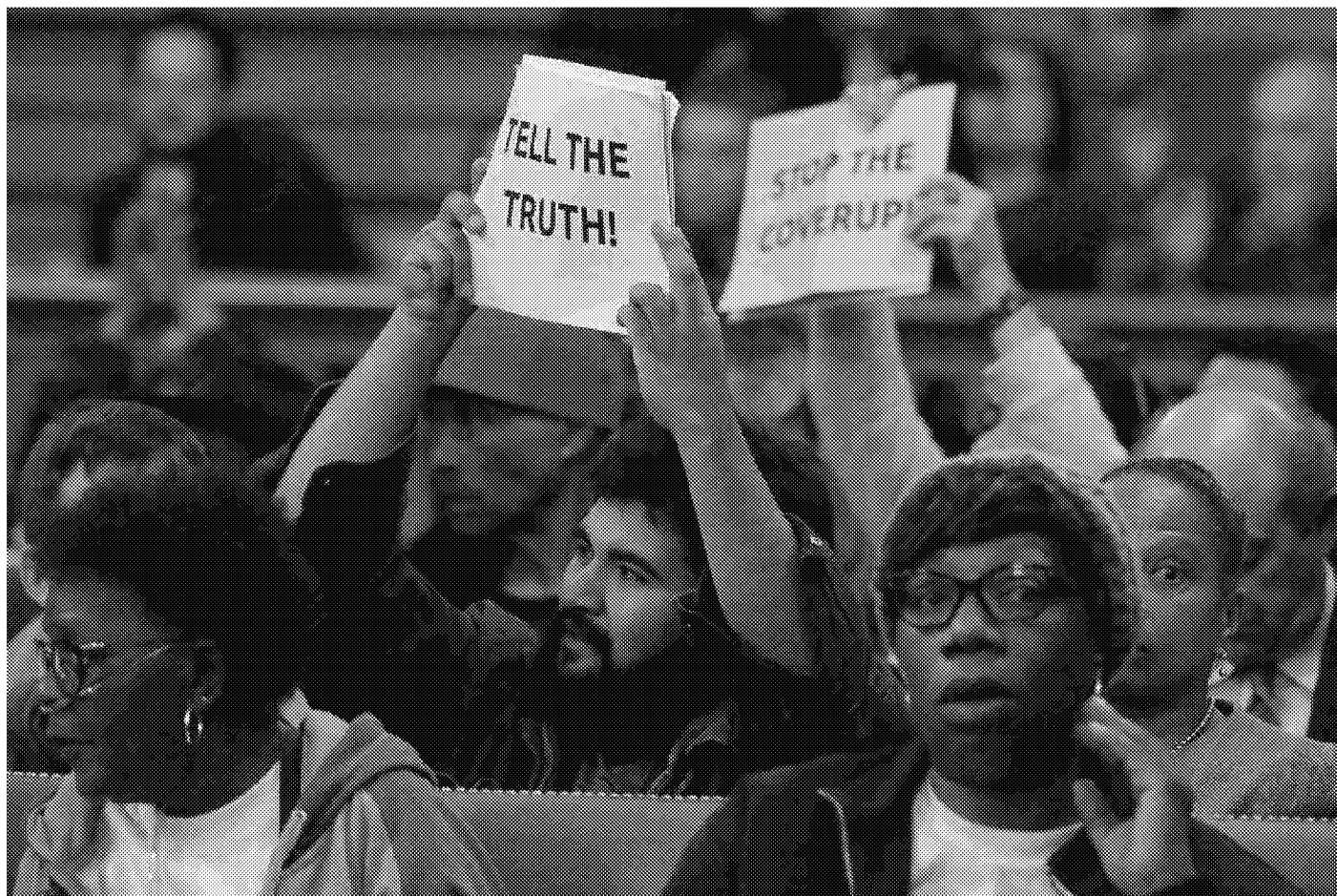


Photo: Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle

People hold up signs during a hearing on the Hunters Point Shipyard cleanup on Monday at the Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee meeting.

San Francisco's elected officials are finally responding to the unprecedented environmental scandal at the Hunters Point Shipyard.

But to achieve the only appropriate outcome for San Francisco — independent testing of all of the land parcels the Navy has transferred or will transfer to the city of San Francisco for housing development — they'll need to fight much harder.

Monday's long, contentious hearing at the Board of Supervisors didn't produce much new information, but it made a few things clear.

Tetra Tech, the Pasadena contractor that was paid hundreds of millions of dollars to remove radioactive and toxic contamination from the shipyard, has offered to pay for an independent evaluation of its work.

Tetra Tech has been accused of fraud by the Navy and the Environmental Protection Agency. Two of its former project supervisors recently pleaded guilty to fraud and were sentenced to eight months in prison. The company insists that it stands by its work. Its crisis consultant, Sam Singer, says that fraud charges are all the work of "two rogue employees."

Clearly, the U.S. Navy needs to take Tetra Tech up on its offer to pay for an independent review.

But it needs to do more than that. As the endless parade of resident complaints, grievances and frustrations showed on Monday, the public's trust in the shipyard cleanup process has eroded to nothing.

That's a big problem.

The shipyard is one of San Francisco's largest developments. Thousands of homes were approved to be built there; the entire city is counting on the project to provide desperately needed housing, especially for people with moderate income levels.

But no one wants to buy or rent a home on land that's potentially toxic.

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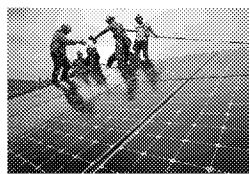
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For decades, residents who already live near the shipyard have complained about cancer clusters, high rates of asthma and other health-related concerns possibly resulting from the proximity of the shipyard's toxic contamination.

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Now, the shipyard's newest residents have grown concerned about the safety of their recently built homes on Parcel A. Parcel A is a hilltop area of the shipyard that the Navy has long asserted is safe. But these residents don't feel safe, and after the revelations of the past several months, it's hard to blame them.

The only responsible solution is for the entire site to be tested — or retested, depending on the parcel.

As desperately as San Francisco needs housing, nothing can be built on a toxic and deceptive foundation. The public needs to believe that the shipyard is safe, and every elected official who cares about San Francisco needs to demand a comprehensive cleanup.

*This commentary is from The Chronicle's editorial board. We invite you to express your views in a letter to the editor. Please submit your letter via our online form: [SFChronicle.com/letters](https://www.sfchronicle.com/letters).*

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